

Kingdom of God Intercession

The first intercession that is recorded in the Bible was not a voluntary one, as far as we can see with human eyes. Yes, the object of substitution may have volunteered their services to the LORD, but there is no mention of such an intervention by this particular portion of creation. In the text, it seems that the LORD volunteered this particular portion of reality to be the intercessor for mankind.

And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

(Genesis 3:17-19)

In most cases, intervention that is of the LORD is a fixed matter of ordinance. In such situations, there is no negotiation. Considering this, let us not think of the discussion in Heaven about Job as being a matter of Satan's persuasive abilities. The intervention of Satan in the life of Job was by ordinance of the LORD. The same is true of all interventions in the kingdom of man. In general, we accept the LORD'S presence as being present when things are positive. However, the ordinance of the LORD is indeed the power source even when it is a negative event, one that could trigger a desire for negotiation with the LORD. The patriarch Job explains:

Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die.

But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?

In all this did not Job sin with his lips.

(Job 2:9-10)

There are, though, some times when the LORD will allow us to practice a form of negotiation, which Scripture identifies by the phrase, *Come now, and let us reason together*. At these times, we are entering into the mode of intercession. The LORD told us of the availability of these times, as He made numerous declarations of the sort that you see below, which is one of the many calls for action by the people of Israel.

Hear the word of the LORD, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the law of

our God, ye people of Gomorrah.

To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the LORD: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats. When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts?

Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood.

Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.

Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.

(Isaiah 1:10-20)

The beginning of Moses ministry provides us with an example of negotiated intercession, which gives us a better understanding of our scope of service in the Kingdom of God. First, the LORD set the stage for Moses to interact with Him:

Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb. And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt.

And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses.

And he said, Here am I.

And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.

And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.

And the LORD said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites.

Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me: and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them. Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt.

(Exodus 3:1-10)

Once the stage was set, Moses started to move through a series of requests, each with its associated acceptance. This is the first request-acceptance combination. It is centered on personal insecurity.

And Moses said unto God, Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?

And he said, Certainly I will be with thee; and this shall be a token unto thee, that I have sent thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain.

(Exodus 3:11-12)

This is the second request-acceptance combination. It is centered on a need for certification of religious stature.

And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them?

And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, the LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations.

Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, and say unto them, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, appeared unto me, saying, I have surely visited you, and seen that which is

done to you in Egypt: And I have said, I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt unto the land of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, unto a land flowing with milk and honey.

And they shall hearken to thy voice: and thou shalt come, thou and the elders of Israel, unto the king of Egypt, and ye shall say unto him, The LORD God of the Hebrews hath met with us: and now let us go, we beseech thee, three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God. And I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not by a mighty hand. And I will stretch out my hand, and smite Egypt with all my wonders which I will do in the midst thereof: and after that he will let you go.

And I will give this people favour in the sight of the Egyptians: and it shall come to pass, that, when ye go, ye shall not go empty. But every woman shall borrow of her neighbour, and of her that sojourneth in her house, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: and ye shall put them upon your sons, and upon your daughters; and ye shall spoil the Egyptians.

(Exodus 3:13-22)

Let us stop here for a moment, to highlight the layered intercession that the LORD designed into the redemption of Israel: this is the same kind of layering that occurs for other entities in the kingdom of man, even today. First, the LORD established Himself as the Author of the intercession: *I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt*. Next, the LORD declares the method that He has ordained for the intercession: *thou shalt come, thou and the elders of Israel, unto the king of Egypt*. Once we understand that we are the method, we may discover that we are in the third request-acceptance combination of Moses. This is the third request-acceptance combination, which is centered on a perceived lack of credentials for service.

And Moses answered and said, But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice: for they will say, The LORD hath not appeared unto thee.

And the LORD said unto him, What is that in thine hand?

And he said, A rod.

And he said, Cast it on the ground.

And he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from before it.

And the LORD said unto Moses, Put forth thine hand, and take it by the tail.

And he put forth his hand, and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand:

That they may believe that the LORD God of their fathers, the God of

Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath appeared unto thee.

And the LORD said furthermore unto him, Put now thine hand into thy bosom.

And he put his hand into his bosom: and when he took it out, behold, his hand was leprous as snow.

And he said, Put thine hand into thy bosom again.

And he put his hand into his bosom again; and plucked it out of his bosom, and, behold, it was turned again as his other flesh.

And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe thee, neither hearken to the voice of the first sign, that they will believe the voice of the latter sign.

And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe also these two signs, neither hearken unto thy voice, that thou shalt take of the water of the river, and pour it upon the dry land: and the water which thou takest out of the river shall become blood upon the dry land.

(Exodus 4:1-9)

The following is the final request-acceptance combination that the LORD gave to Moses. It was given to Moses as a tool of the Spirit, for him to use to convince the people that he was authorized to intervene on their behalf with Pharaoh. It is centered on a clarification of Who it is that actually delivers messages of divine deliverance.

And Moses said unto the LORD, O my LORD, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue.

And the LORD said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the LORD? Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say.

And he said, O my LORD, send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom thou wilt send.

And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Moses, and he said, Is not Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know that he can speak well. And also, behold, he cometh forth to meet thee: and when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his heart. And thou shalt speak unto him, and put words in his mouth: and I will be with thy mouth, and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye shall do. And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people: and he shall be, even he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God.

And thou shalt take this rod in thine hand, wherewith thou shalt do signs.

(Exodus 4:10-17)

The final request-acceptance combination, of Exodus 4:10-17, above, was followed by active participation on the part of Moses and Aaron:

And Moses went and returned to Jethro his father in law, and said unto him, Let me go, I pray thee, and return unto my brethren which are in Egypt, and see whether they be yet alive.

And Jethro said to Moses, Go in peace.

(Exodus 4:18)

And the LORD said unto Moses in Midian, Go, return into Egypt: for all the men are dead which sought thy life.

And Moses took his wife and his sons, and set them upon an ass, and he returned to the land of Egypt: and Moses took the rod of God in his hand.

(Exodus 4:19-20)

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The requests for intervention, as originating in the Kingdom of Heaven portion of the Kingdom of God, are not just limited to the start of a mission. There are some requests that involve the normal course of life, or death. Such a request is the substance of this plea of this king.

*In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz came unto him, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Set thine house in order: for thou shalt die, and not live.*

*Then Hezekiah turned his face toward the wall, and prayed unto the LORD, And said, Remember now, O LORD, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight.*

*And Hezekiah wept sore.*

*Then came the word of the LORD to Isaiah, saying, Go, and say to Hezekiah, Thus saith the LORD, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will add unto thy days fifteen years. And I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria: and I will defend this city. And this shall be a sign unto thee from the LORD, that the LORD will do this thing that he hath spoken; Behold, I will bring again the shadow of the degrees, which is gone down in the sun dial of Ahaz, ten degrees backward.*

*So the sun returned ten degrees, by which degrees it was gone down.*

(Isaiah 38:1-8)

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Requests for intercession are not just for the pure of heart. To give you an example of that in history, we need to set the stage for the request. To do this, we present portions of the life of king Ahab. As a prelude, though, an example of the impurity of the heart of this king is repeated here.

Now in the eighteenth year of king Jeroboam the son of Nebat reigned Abijam over Judah. Three years reigned he in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Maachah, the daughter of Abishalom. And he walked in all the sins of his father, which he had done before him: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father.

(1 Kings 15:1-3)

Even though Ahab is on record as being of the sort that *did evil in the sight of the LORD*, as indicated here . . .

And in the thirty and eighth year of Asa king of Judah began Ahab the son of Omri to reign over Israel: and Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel in Samaria twenty and two years. And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD above all that were before him.

And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshipped him. And he reared up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. And Ahab made a grove; and Ahab did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him.

In his days did Hiel the Bethelite build Jericho: he laid the foundation thereof in Abiram his firstborn, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest son Segub, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by Joshua the son of Nun.

(1 Kings 16:29-34)

. . . Still, the LORD inclined His ear to Ahab's request. Still, the LORD ordained intercessions for Ahab, too. Here is such a situation that definitely required the LORD'S intervention. In the beginning of it, the king of Israel was totally unable to defend his people. Messengers came from afar, to let the king know of his impotence.

And Benhadad the king of Syria gathered all his host together: and there

were thirty and two kings with him, and horses, and chariots: and he went up and besieged Samaria, and warred against it. And he sent messengers to Ahab king of Israel into the city, and said unto him, Thus saith Benhadad, Thy silver and thy gold is mine; thy wives also and thy children, even the goodliest, are mine.

And the king of Israel answered and said, My lord, O king, according to thy saying, I am thine, and all that I have.

And the messengers came again, and said, Thus speaketh Benhadad, saying, Although I have sent unto thee, saying, Thou shalt deliver me thy silver, and thy gold, and thy wives, and thy children; Yet I will send my servants unto thee to morrow about this time, and they shall search thine house, and the houses of thy servants; and it shall be, that whatsoever is pleasant in thine eyes, they shall put it in their hand, and take it away.

(1 Kings 20:1-6)

The king of Israel needed a powerful intercession, from somewhere outside of his self and outside of his kingdom. There had to be a substitution of someone or something to either make up for the weakness for the king, or to provide a way to bypass the conflict, altogether. As we read, below, the king of Israel did not have that type of power in himself.

Then the king of Israel called all the elders of the land, and said, Mark, I pray you, and see how this man seeketh mischief: for he sent unto me for my wives, and for my children, and for my silver, and for my gold; and I denied him not.

And all the elders and all the people said unto him, Hearken not unto him, nor consent.

Wherefore he said unto the messengers of Benhadad, Tell my lord the king, All that thou didst send for to thy servant at the first I will do: but this thing I may not do.

And the messengers departed, and brought him word again.

And Benhadad sent unto him, and said, The gods do so unto me, and more also, if the dust of Samaria shall suffice for handfuls for all the people that follow me.

And the king of Israel answered and said, Tell him, Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off.

And it came to pass, when Benhadad heard this message, as he was drinking, he and the kings in the pavilions, that he said unto his servants, Set yourselves in array.

And they set themselves in array against the city.

(1 Kings 20:7-12)

Even though such a situation is a clear reason to petition and plead with the LORD for an intercession; because Ahab *did evil in the sight of the LORD*, he had lost his sensitivity to the LORD'S mighty power to act on his behalf; as would we too. If we either are, or know of someone who is, in this sort of situation, we may see that, sometimes the intercession is done in a spontaneous fashion. In Ahab's predicament, the intercession occurred without Ahab humbling himself prior to the intercession. This is an example of a kind of spontaneity that flows in the Kingdom of God. This also gives us an ideal place for a pause, in preparation for a continuance of our study of the Kingdom of God.

When we return, we will explore spontaneity, further. For now, study this example of the LORD'S Spontaneity.

And, behold, there came a prophet unto Ahab king of Israel, saying, Thus saith the LORD, Hast thou seen all this great multitude? behold, I will deliver it into thine hand this day; and thou shalt know that I am the LORD.

And Ahab said, By whom?

And he said, Thus saith the LORD, Even by the young men of the princes of the provinces.

Then he said, Who shall order the battle?

And he answered, Thou.

Then he numbered the young men of the princes of the provinces, and they were two hundred and thirty two: and after them he numbered all the people, even all the children of Israel, being seven thousand. And they went out at noon.

But Benhadad was drinking himself drunk in the pavilions, he and the kings, the thirty and two kings that helped him. And the young men of the princes of the provinces went out first; and Benhadad sent out, and they told him, saying, There are men come out of Samaria.

And he said, Whether they be come out for peace, take them alive; or whether they be come out for war, take them alive.

So these young men of the princes of the provinces came out of the city, and the army which followed them. And they slew every one his man: and the Syrians fled; and Israel pursued them: and Benhadad the king of Syria escaped on an horse with the horsemen.

And the king of Israel went out, and smote the horses and chariots, and slew the Syrians with a great slaughter.

And the prophet came to the king of Israel, and said unto him, Go, strengthen thyself, and mark, and see what thou doest: for at the return of the year the king of Syria will come up against thee.

